UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY
FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

UNRWA

NGOs

UNRWA's work with non-governmental organizations

Staff from UNRWA and non-go.ernmental organizations (NGOs) work together throughout the year to run essential services for Palestine refugees, continuing a tradition of UNRWA-NGO partnership and cooperation which dates back to the establishment of the Agency in 1950.

NGOs have complemented UNRWA's education, health, relief and social services to refugees by pioneering work in assisting people with disabilities and launching community self-help and income-generation programmes. They have given financial aid, assistance in elementary schooling, staff training, maternal and child health care and have distributed food and medical supplies. They run pilot projects in new domains and in emergency situations. For its part, UNRWA helps NGOs by giving direct financial aid or by sharing expertise, technology and information and through joint training workshops. The Agency also participates with NGOs in seminars and planning, assists with their fund-raising campaigns and supports the development of community organizations.

NGOs *UNRWA*

UNRWA works with over 50 national or international and some 250 local NGOs. They are generally medical-humanitarian-, human rights- and development-oriented.

At local level, these organizations range from support groups for individual hospitals or centres for the disabled, to societies for the physically or mentally handicapped covering a particular town or area, locally-based law centres and development centres, women's associations, universities, medical associations and camp or village committees.

The national or international NGOs include refugee councils; institutions representing the interests of children, youth, women, the disabled or the aged; peace funds; religious associations, and groups specializing in technical or economic development.

NGOs give financial assistance for Agency programmes and projects - directly or from the funds of governments and inter-governmental organizations (such as the European Community). UNRWA has reciprocated, channelling almost $3.1 million to local NGO hospitals since 1987.

UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) provides education, health, relief and social services to 2.8 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Over 99 per cent of UNRWA's nearly 20,000 employees are from the region, almost all of them Palestinians. Over 180 international staff also work for the Agency, which is financed almost entirely by voluntary contributions. The Agency's 1993 combined regular and emergency budget totals some $320 million.

Partners in education, health and relief

UNRWA has developed links with NGOs in all its three main programmes - education, health and relief and social services.

*The Agency's largest programme - **education** - takes nearly half the regular budget and provides schooling for 393,000 Palestinian refugee children in 641 schools as well as vocational and technical training places for more than 5,000 trainees in eight centres.*

*The **health** programme provides preventive and curative care as well as mother and child and environmental health care through a network of 118 health centres and specialized clinics.*

*UNRWA's **relief and social services** programme registers refugees, handles emergency relief and facilitates longer term social and economic development for refugees and their communities.*

EDUCATION

Traditionally, the large-scale nature of the Agency's education programme has not lent itself to support from NGOs who usually focus on small-scale activities. However, the Agency is establishing contacts with local NGOs and has maintained cooperation with a number of national or international NGOs, including ARAMCO, AUSTCARE, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations of Japan (NFUAJ), Rädda Barnen, Rissho Kosei-kai Fund for Peace (Japan), Vluchteling (Netherlands Refugee Foundation) and the YMCA.

They offer direct assistance for: classroom and school construction, university scholarships, remedial work with slow-learners, provision of equipment, tools and vocational training.

HEALTH

Cooperation between UNRWA's health programme and local and international NGOs focuses on the training of health staff, provision of medical supplies and equipment and the financing clinics.

UNRWA-NGO joint training workshops were held to ensure the safety of blood transfusion facilities at NGO hospitals in the occupied territory. Two WHO consultants in health insurance were seconded to work with UNRWA and a Jerusalem research centre to consider a health insurance plan for the Gaza Strip and West Bank population.

National and international organizations cooperating with UNRWA in this domain include Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), UK, Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad (APHEDA) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

RELIEF AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Among the Agency's three programmes, Relief and Social Services has traditionally had the closest relationships with both international and local NGOs. NGOs have provided assistance through staff and client training, research and evaluation studies and complementary services especially in relation to women-in-development, poverty alleviation and rehabilitation of disabled people.

For these purposes, UNRWA works with a wide range of local groups and international NGOs such as OXFAM, Save the Children, the Near East Foundation, Norwegian People's Aid, Cooperation for Development (CD), the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), the YMCA, Catholic Relief Services and Terre des Hommes.

In the past, many Relief and Social Services initiatives were dependent on NGO donations. The Agency has worked with NGOs to: promote the development of community organizations such as centres for disabled refugees, young people and women; launch a drug addiction prevention course in the West Bank and hold a communication course for hearing-impaired refugee children in the Tripoli area of north Lebanon.

Special Programmes

NGOs take part in UNRWA's special programmes for income generation, legal assistance, family planning and women's personal involvement in community development.

INCOME GENERATION

The Agency and NGOs pool their resources to promote income generation projects, particularly in the occupied territory where there are contractual relations with NGOs for conducting feasibility studies and market research. Proposals for loan-supported projects are referred to NGOs for analysis and recommendations in order to avoid duplication of funding. Monthly coordination meetings are held with local and international NGOs on loan policies, research and training.

UNRWA coordinates with the business department of a West Bank university to provide business training for participants in its Income Generation Programme. In 1992-93, UNRWA financed three courses on business management and one on marketing, organized by the university. The Agency has also financed a university feasibility study for a fibre-glass factory and a general survey of the service sector in the West Bank.

Women

UNRWA and NGOs run a variety of innovative projects for Palestinian refugee women. In Jenin camp, in the West Bank, a local NGO provided specialists for a course on legal rights for women following the success of a similar course held in Amman New Camp, Jordan.

A local non-governmental organization supports literacy classes for refugee women at centres established by UNRWA. The Agency and a local NGO helped a women's business centre to organize mobile workshops in the Nablus area where UNRWA also coordinates with a welfare society to construct women's centres and run kindergartens.

In Bireh and Ramallah, in the West Bank, the Agency refers elderly women for care at two NGO homes, so releasing and encouraging younger women to take part in various women's programmes.

FAMILY AND CHILD CARE

Three NGOs are working on a proposal for a community-based project in child care and development, backed by UNDP, UNICEF and Bir Zeit University, West Bank. The Agency coordinates with them and with UNESCO in securing funds for a pilot project to establish a community centre and kindergarten in Deir Ammar camp, Jerusalem. UNRWA also supports a number of organizations promoting family planning and counselling.

Legal matters

UNRWA runs a programme of legal assistance in the occupied territory, coordinating with local groups of lawyers and NGOs who are helpful sources of advice in dealing with legal and human rights abuses. The Agency has given financial support to a West Bank university for the creation of a law centre.

UNRWA-NGO work Field by Field

UNRWA coordinates with NGOs in each of the five Fields in which it operates - the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

UNRWA-NGO aid in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

UNRWA's contact with NGOs is particularly important in the Israeli-occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There and in Lebanon, in addition to its regular budget, the Agency has an emergency-related fund (EMLOT - Emergency Measures in Lebanon and the Occupied Territory) for extensive programmes of food distribution and general assistance to those most in need. During the *intifadah*, this fund has enabled the Agency - in coordination with NGOs - to provide extra medical, humanitarian and social services.

The Agency also runs an Expanded Programme of Assistance (EPA) for improvements in infrastructure such as shelter rehabilitation and installation and upgrading of sewerage systems in camps. NGOs are actively involved in these longer-term plans and projects for community development.

With an eye to the future, the Agency cooperates with NGOs working in the West Bank and Gaza, such as the Palestine Red Crescent, universities, legal institutions and the Arab Women's Union, as well as with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) in preparation for the time following a final peace settlement in the region.

Food distribution

UNRWA delivers food rations to Palestinians in times of emergency, as well as regularly distributing food to thousands of people - refugees and some non-refugees - via NGOs and charitable institutions in the occupied territory.

Physiotherapy

The Agency coordinates with a number of local NGOs who provide medical and physiotherapy treatment for Palestinians, and subsidizes refugee children who need in-patient treatment at a local centre. UNRWA also runs its own physiotherapy programme sponsored by UNICEF. Médecins Sans Frontières financed the cost of four physiotherapy assistants and contributed medical supplies. For refugees needing in-patient treatment, the Agency subsidizes beds at a West Bank hospital run by the Lutheran World Federation and at a Gaza hospital. It sends medical supplies

to the health unit of a West Bank university for quality control and provides dental services once a week at an NGO centre in the Jericho area.

Training ambulance crews

In the Gaza Strip, the Agency helps train ambulance drivers working for local NGOs, donates or loans medication and supplies to several local voluntary organizations while international NGOs have helped UNRWA train midwives (SCF) and lab technicians (MSF), as well as provide mobile health teams and health education in UNRWA schools (Rädda Bärnen). In the West Bank, the Agency exchanges statistics and information on health services with Medical Aid for Palestinians.

Teacher training

Cooperation with NGOs in the occupied territory also extends to the Agency's education programme: teacher trainees from two Gaza universities do their teaching practice at UNRWA schools. Two West Bank NGOs coordinate with instructors from UNRWA's vocational training centres to organize training for elementary and preparatory school teachers. Agency instructors also help run courses on business administration, accounting and beauty culture, organized by a local society in the West Bank.

Encouraging reading

UNRWA supported a campaign to encourage reading in all its schools as part of a joint effort with the Tamer Institute in the West Bank to improve the standards of education in Arabic and mathematics, based on a study conducted by the NGO.

Assistance for disabled people

On the recommendation of a local committee in the West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA started a training programme for disabled refugees in cooperation with the International Labour Organization and OXFAM. There are now nearly 20 community rehabilitation centres for disabled refugees, spread throughout UNRWA's five fields. The projects are run by local committees with UNRWA providing technical support, some funding and serving as a channel to other donors.

Youth

The Agency coordinates with three West Bank universities on specialized courses for local youth leaders with the aim of enchancing their contribution to community development.

Environment

The Agency coordinates with ANERA (American Near East Refugees Aid) and the Save the Children Federation regarding a sewage disposal system for Jalazone camp. UNDP implemented the renovation of part of the sewerage system at Balata Camp. NGOs have also helped with shelter repairs for some of the refugees registered with UNRWA as being particularly needy.

Agriculture

In coordination with UNRWA, two local agricultural committees organized workshops and seminars for farmers on activities such as beekeeping, honey production, marketing, poultry farming, forestry, cultivation of olive trees and olive oil production.

LEBANON

UNRWA is in close contact with some 55 NGOs in Lebanon who are mainly involved in pre-school education, vocational and staff training, medical and therapeutic services, and social services to orphans, disabled people, youth and women.

The Agency coordinates with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on social and humanitarian services and during emergencies. Norwegian People's Aid is one of a number of organizations which receive disabled Palestinians referred by UNRWA for physiotherapy and prosthetic devices.

A local NGO in Beirut works with the Agency in marketing women's handiwork and on women's literacy programmes and income generation projects. In Tyre, the Agency gives health education lectures to a women's association which runs kindergartens, sewing centres and a knitting production unit.

The Agency coordinates vocational training with Norwegian People's Aid and works with a number of NGOs to run joint education workshops for refugees, remedial education and extracurricular and community activities.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

UNRWA's cooperation with local NGOs in Syria focuses on assistance to disabled refugees. In general, international NGOs do not operate in the S.A.R. and local NGOs there have only limited resources. An Aleppo society runs three training courses on physiotherapy for eight volunteers at the Neirab Community Rehabilitation Centre, established by UNRWA. A Damascus society for the blind gives winter subsidies - in cash and kind - for nine blind refugees at Yarmouk. An NGO dealing with the disabled has provided educational material and toys for Dera'a Community Rehabilitation Centre to the value of LS. 15,000.

JORDAN

In Jordan, OXFAM, DIAKONIA (Swedish Free Church Aid) and the Norwegian Refugee Council have been paying the running costs of three UNRWA-established community rehabilitation centres for disabled children in Waqqas and in Jerash and Baqa'a camps, while the Mennonite Central Committee (USA) has funded an activity at Husn camp rehabilitation centre.

The Near East Foundation is training staff to identify women entrepreneurs and give advice on starting small businesses. Quaker Peace and Service (UK) has provided a volunteer each year since 1990 to help with UNRWA's women's programme. The YMCA of Japan sponsors short-term vocational training courses at UNRWA's Wadi Seer Training Centre for Palestinians who returned from the Gulf states, as well as providing Japanese volunteers to help the YMCA of Jordan with the annual summer camp for orphan refugee children, held at UNRWA's Amman Training Centre.

UNIPAL (The Universities' Educational Fund for Palestinian Refugees), UK, each year sends volunteers to help children and teachers learn and teach English during the UNRWA schools' summer vacation.

Since October 1987, the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) has been covering the annual running costs - US $55-60,000 - of five specialist clinics in Baqa'a camp and two dental clinics at Jerash camp and in the Jordan Valley.

Two local NGOs provide technical experience and machines for the women's wool spinning centre in Jerash camp and train the committee of the women's programme centre in Talbieh camp. Seven other local NGOs provide specialists for the community-based rehabilitation centres established by UNRWA and/or take referrals from them.

Partners from around the world.....

UNRWA works with some 50 national and international NGOs . They include:

American Friends Service Committee, USA
Holy Land Christian Mission, USA
AGFUND
Amnesty International
APHEDA and AUSTCARE, Australia
Campaign for Children of Palestine ,Japan
CANSAVE (Canadian Save the Children),
CARITAS (Swiss and German Aid, Switzerland)
COCIS - Italian NGOs for International Development Cooperation,
Cooperation for Development ,UK
Danish Refugee Council
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe ,Germany,
Direct Relief International, USA
Enfants Réfugiés du Monde
EURONAID, Italy
Finnish Refugee Council
International Islamic Charitable Foundation, Kuwait,
Islamic Development Bank ,Saudi Arabia
Islamic World Association
Italian Trade Unions Federation
Mainichi, Japan
Médécins Sans Frontières,Belgium, via EC,
Medical Aid for Palestinians,UK and Canada
Mennonite Central Committee,USA
Middle East Council of Churches,Cyprus
National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan,
Netherlands UNESCO Centre
Norwegian Refugee Council
OXFAM,UK
Pontifical Mission for Palestine,USA
Rädda Bärnen (Save the Children Federation, Sweden)
Redd Barna (Save the Children Fund, Norway),
Red Crescent societies of Egypt, Qatar, Turkey and the UAE,
Rissho Kosei-kai Fund for Peace,Japan
Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi ARAMCO),
Save the Children Fund,UK
SOS Village
Soka Gakkai International,Japan
Spafford Children's Centre,USA
Swedish Free Church Aid (DIAKONIA)
Trento autonomous province, Italy
Vluchteling (Netherlands Refugee Foundation),
Welfare Association,Switzerland
World Vision,Canada

Keeping in contact

Most of the NGOs assisting Palestine refugees and cooperating with UNRWA take part in umbrella organizations such as the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) or the International/European Coordination Committee of NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP and ECCP). UNRWA regularly attends their international meetings and so keeps in permanent contact with the NGO decision-makers

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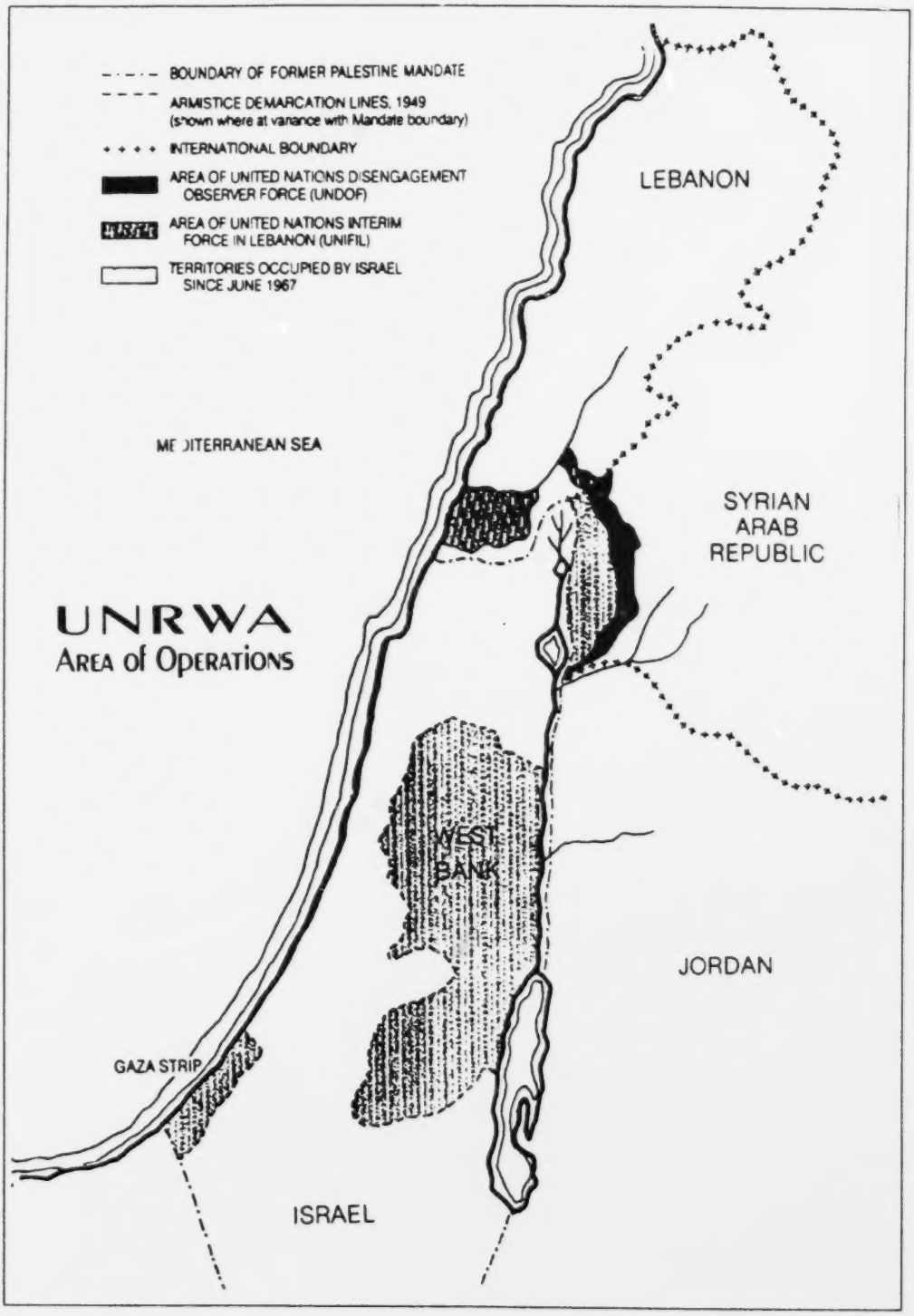

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